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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8900

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

USDEL FRANCE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

COMUSMACV

CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 4 SAIGON 4574

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT MOPS VS

SUBJECT: VIET- NAM CEASE- FIRE SITUATION REPORT MARCH 20 1973

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

THIS REPORT SUMMARIZES ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO
THE EMBASSY AS OF 2000 MARCH 20.

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SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

PART I ICCS: INVESTIGATION OF TON LE CHAM/ RACH BAP INCIDENTS ORDERED; TRI TON, HONG NGU SITES UNDER FIRE

PART II FPJMC: POW RELEASES CONTINUE

PART III RVN- NLF BILATERAL TALKS BEGIN IN PARIS

PART IV GVN CHARGES 7,814 COMMUNIST CEASE FIRE VIOLATIONS

PART V GVN DEFENDS ITS RECORDS ON POW RELEASES

PART VI HANOI/ VC PROPAGANDA: SEVEEST BLAST YET AT US

PART VII MR1: INCIDENTS DOWN

PART VIII MR2: MILITARY ACTIVITY DOWN

PART IX MR 3: INCIDENTS UP, RANGER CAMP AT TON LE CHAM
CONDITION GRAVE

PART X MR :4 MILITARY ACTIVITY RELATIVELY LOW BUT REPORTS
OF NVA REINFORCEMENTS

PART I INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CONTROL AND SUPERVISION
(ICCS)

1. MARCH 19 ICCS PLENARY, IN RESPONSES TO US FPJMC LETTER, ORDERED INVESTIGATIONS OF COMPLAINTS OF VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASE FIRE BY THE OTHER SIDE AT RACH BAP (BINH DUONG PROVINCE) AND TON-LE CHAM (TAY NINH - BINH LONG BORDER).
2. THE PLENARY ALSO CONSIDERED AND UNANIMOUSLY DECIDED TO FORWARD TO THE FPJMC A REPORT OF ICCS REGION II' S INVESTIGATION OF AN ICCS HELICOPTER SHOOTING INCIDENT. THE MAJORITY REPORT SUPPORTED BY CANADIANS, INDONESIANS AND POLES, INCLUDED TESTIMONY BY THE HELICOPTER' S AMERICAN CREW REGARDING THE PROBABILITY THAT THE FIRE AS FROM AK' S, AND ADDITIONAL TESTIMONY FROM THE GVN REGARDING THE CONTESTED NATURE OF THE AREA WHERE THE ATTACK TOOK PLACE. HUNGDEL MR III REFUSED TO INCLUDE THIS EVIDENCE AND SUBMITTED A MINORITY REPORT. CANDEL STATES THAT HUNGDEL REP HAS SINCE BEEN REPLACED.
3. THE PLENARY AT THE REQUEST OF THE SECRETARIAT, CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL

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CERTAIN PROBLEMS REGARDING THE AIR SERVICE CONTRACT AND DECIDED TO AUTHORIZE ITS CHAIRMAN (THE HUNGARIAN DELEGATE) AND THE CANADIAN DELEGATE TO CALL ON THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO DISCUSS THEM. (THEIR DEMARCHE IS SUBJECT OF SEPTEL.)

R. AIR SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS WERE CONSIDERED AND SENT TO THE FPJMC FOR ITS COMMENTS.

5. THE PLENARY THEN ENGAGED IN A CONFUSED DISCUSSION OF WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WITH SUMMARY ALLEGATIONS OF CEASE FIRE VIOLATIONS COVERING 24 PERIODS, WHICH THE GVN LIAISON MISSION TO THE ICCS

REGULARLY DISPATCHES TO THE ICCS MEMBERS. CANDEL WANTED TO SEND THEM TO THE FPJMC WITH AN APPEAL TO ALL PARTIES TO OBSERVE THE CEASE FIRE. POLDEL AND HUNGDEL BJECTED TO THIS COURSE. NO DECISION WAS ARRIVED AT.

6. THERE WERE THREE ICCS RELATED ATTACKS IN MR 4. ON MARCH 19 TRI TON (ICCS REGION VII) RECEIVED THREE ROUNDS OF 82 MM MORTAR NEAR ICCS COMPOUND. ICCS TRI TON STATED THAT IT WOULD NOT RPT NOT INVESTIATE UNLESS ITS SAFETY WAS ASSURED BY THE FPJMC. AT HONG NGU (ICCS REGION VI) ON MARCH 20 TWO ROCKETS(ONE BELIEVED TO BE 107 MM AND THE OTHER 120 MM) HIT NEAR THE ICCS COMPOUND. THE FIRST (ACCORDING TO AMERICAN OBSERVERS) WAS 125 METERS FROM THE COMPOUND AND THE SECOND WAS 250 METERS. FOUR CHILDREN WERE WOUNDED AND ONE WOMAN KILLED. HONG NGU ICCS, WHICH IS MANNED ONLY BY CANADIANS AND INDONESIANS, STATED THAT IT WOULD WITHDRAW IF SITUATION FURTHER DETERIORATED. IN LATE AFTERNOON THIRD ROCKET HIT AREA. WE DO NOT REPEAT NOT YET HAVE INFORMATION ON HOW CLOSE THE ROCKET WAS TO ICCS OR WHAT CASUALTIES IT CAUSED

NOR DO WE KNOW WHAT ICCS HONG NGU' S REACTION WAS.

7. ON MARCH 19 AND ICCS HELICOPTER WAS FIRED ON WHILE IN LOW LEVEL

FLIGHT TWO RO THREE KILOMETERS EAST OF MY THO (ICCS REGION VI). THERE WERE NO HITS. AS A RESULT CANDEL MAJOR GENERAL MCALPINE ORDERED THAT ALL HELICOPTER FLIGHTS BE MADE AT 3,500 FEET OR HIGHER.

PART II FOUR PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION (FPJMC)

1. AS OF MARCH 19 PW RETURNS WERE CONTINUING SMOOTHLY WITH A TOTAL OF 18,690 VC AND NVA POW' S ALREADY RELEASED; AS OF THAT DATE A TOTAL OF 8,266 COMMUNIST POW' S REMAINED IN ARVN PW CAMPS. DURING THE SAME PERIOD A TOTAL OF 2,951 RVN MILITARY POWS HAD BEEN RETURNED BY THE OTHER SIDE. THUS FAR A TOTAL OF 12 NVA/ VC PRISONERS HAVE REFUSED REPATRIATION AND HAVE BEEN CONFIDENTIAL

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PROCESSED AS HOW CHANH. ALLEGEDLY 5 RVN POWS HAVE REFUSED RETURN.

2. AT THE MEETING OF THE CENTRAL FOUR PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION MARCH 19 THE DRV AND PRG AGREED THAT PHASE IV POW RETURNS SHOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED AHEAD OF SCHEDULE ALTHOUGH AS OF 1700 HOURS LOCAL MARCH 20 THE US WAS STILL AWAITING A FORMAL RESPONSE TO ITS REQUEST FOR DETAILS OF PHASE IV, (HOWEVER, THE PRG INFORMED UPI MARCH 20 THAT US POWS IT HOLD WOULD BE RE-LEASED ON MARCH 25 BUT WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION OF THIS.)

3. OTHERWISE MEETING OF CHIEFS FOCUSED ON LARGE AMOUNT OF WORK YET TO BE DONE IN VERY LIMITED TIME REMAING. THE US DELEGATION

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (P A R A V --- TEXT)

STRESSED THAT MOST IMPORTANT FPJMC TASK WOULD BE TO ESTABLISH FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR THE TWO PARTY JMC NOTED IN THIS CONNECTION THAT ALL FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS AT REGIONS HAD BEEN COMPLETED AND URGED PRG TO DEPLOY. REST OF MEETING WAS SPENT ON DISCUSSION OF REMAINING THREE POINTS OF 11 POINT DRAFT AGREEMENT ON SECURITY, MOVEMENT PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES. THE CHIEFS REACHED AGREEMENT ON POINT 9-11 (MEDICAL CARE; TRANSPORTATION; CONFIDENTIAL

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LIAISON TRIPS) WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT A TWELFTH POINT DEALING WITH THE SEPARATE ISSUE OF LIAISON TRIPS TO HANOI WOULD BE DISCUSSED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF CHIEFS OF DELEGATION ON MARCH 21
4. THE US DELEGATION HAS BEEN ADVISED THAT THE HEAD OF THE RVN DELEGATION TO THE TWO PARTY JCM WILL BE LTG PHAM QUOC THUAN

WHO IS CURRENT COMMANDANT OF THE RESERVE OFFICER SCHOOL AT THUDUC. THUAN PERSONALLY CLOSE TO PRESIDENT THIEU DOES NOT APPEAR A DISTINGUISHED CHOICE FOR THE JOB.

PART III RVN/ NLF BILATERAL TALKS

THE FORMAL BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS CALLED FOR BY THE PARIS AGREEMENT OPENED AS SCHEDULED MARCH 19 IN A SUBURB OF PARIS(FOR SUBSTANTIVE REPORT SEE USDEL 06786). THIS FOLLOWS MANY WEEKS OF INFORMAL " CONTACTS" BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES IN PARIS DURING WHICH THE VENUE, LEVEL, AND OTHER MODALITIES OF THE BILATERAL WERE THE SUBJECT OF LENGTHY DISPUTE.

PART IV GVN CHARGES 7,814 COMMUNIST CEASE FIRE VIOLATIONS ACCORDING TO VIETNAM PRESS PM MARCH 20 THROUGH 0600 MARCH 20 THE COMMUNISTS HAVE VIOLATED THE CEASE FIRE 7,814 TIMES. DURING THE POST CEASE FIRE PERIOD THE GVN CLAIMS TO HAVE KILLED 14,213 COMMUNIST SOLDIERS AND TO HAVE CAPTURED 209 WHILE SUFFERING LOSSES OF 2,817 KILLED 13,638 WOUNDED, AND 735 MISSING. THE GVN ALSO CHARGES THAT 342 CIVILIANS HAVE BEEN SLAIN 1,054 WOUNDED AND 820 ABDUCTED BY THE COMMUNISTS.

PART V FOREIGN MINISTRY DEFINES ITS RECORD ON PRISONER RELEASE

THE GVN FOREIGN MINISTRY ISSUED COMMUNIQUE MARCH 16 CITING FACTS AND FIGURES OF PRISONER RELEASES AND EXCHANGES OF LISTS TO CONTRAST POOR RECORD OF VIET CONG WITH GVN'S STRICT APPLICATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT. THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO CRITICIZES DRV AND VC FOR LOW NUMBER OF GVN PRISONERS THEY PROFESS TO HAVE COMPARED TO GVN RECORDS ON THE SUBJECT NOTING THAT CIVILIANS CAPTURED IN HUE DURING 1968 TET OFFENSIVE AND BIN BINH DINH DURING 1972 EASTER OFFENSIVE WOULD IN EACH CASE NUMBER MORE THAN THE 200 TOTAL THE OTHER SIDE CLAIMS TO HAVE. GVN CONCLUSION IS THAT CAPTURED CIVILIANS HAVE BEEN EITHER KILLED AND BURIED IN MASS GRAVES, CONSCRIPTED TO SERVE AS WAR COOLIES OR ARE STILL DETAINED IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

PART VI HANOI/ VIET CONG PROPAGANDA CONFIDENTIAL

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1. NHAN DAN BLASTS US" DARK SCHEMES" IN SOUTH VIETNAM. ON THE OCCASION OF THE 23 RD " NATIONWIDE ANTI- US DAY THE HANOI PARTY NEWSPAPER, NHAN DAN IN ITS MARCH 19 EDITORIAL SAID THAT THE US MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN RESUMING MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN WHICH IT WOULD SUFFER " EVEN HEAVIER LOSSES", AND DEVELOPING " NEW AND NORMAL RELATIONS" WITH NORTH VIETNAM. IN RESPONSE TO WHAT HANOI APPARENTLY PERCEIVED AS A THREAT BY PRESIDENT NIXON TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST RENEWED INFILTRATION, THE EDITORIAL WANED VAGUELY THAT THE COMMUNISTS HAVE " ADEQUATE DETERMINATION AND CONDITIONS" TO COUNTER THE US, " NEWScheme" AND TO " FULFILL THEIR SACRED NATIONAL LIBERATION MISSION." THE EDITORIAL REPEATED ALL OF THE STANDARD CHARGES OF US: GVN BAD FAITH BUT GOES ON TO ALLEGE

THAT THE US HAS " MAINTAINED AND ILLEGALLY REINFORCE" ITS " DIS
GUISED" MILITARY PERSONNEL AND HAS ORGANIZED " A NETWORK OF
EMBASSY OFFICES AND CONSULATES TO USE AS A COMMAND MACHINERY."
NHAN DAN CLAIMED THAT THE SITUATION IS " EXTREMELY SERIOUS BE-
CAUSE IT THREATENS PEACE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCLUDED
AGREEMENT."

2. COMMENT: THIS EDITORIAL CONTAINS THE MOST STRIDENT LANGUAGE
HANOI HAS USED SINCE THE CEASE FIRE. HANOI TO BE SURE FELT
OBLIGED TO REACT TO PRESIDENT NIXON' S MARCH 15 REMAKRS BUT AT
THE SAME TIME, ITS COMMENTS REFLECT INCREASED ANGER AND PERHAPS
ANXIETY OVER THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTH. THIS IS ALSO THE FIRST
NOTED REFERENCE BY HANOI TO THE VIET NAM MISSION REORGANIZATIONM
NHAN DAN' S SENTIMENTS WERE ECHOED IN RECENT REMAKRS BY XUAN THUY
AND FORMER DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE DRV PARIS TALKS DELEGATION HA
VAN LAU AS REPORTED IN THE FOREIGN PRESS.

PART VII MR 1

1. FIRST REGIONAL ASSISTANCE COMMAND HELD BRIEF STAND DOWN
CEREMONY ON MARCH 20 1973 AT I CORPS HQS. THE MAYOR
OF DANANG HAS SCHEDULED AN OFFICIAL TRIBUTE TO AMERICAN ARMED
FORCES FOR SUNDAY MARCH 25.

2. THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS DROPPED. IN THE AIRBORNE AO, INCI-
DENTS FELL TO THE LOWEST LEVEL SINCE 28 JAN: 1 AFB WITH 10
MORTAR ROUNDS. FIRST DIVISION AO TOOK 16 ABFS, WITH A TOTAL OF
520 ROUNDS OF MORTAR FIRE. ACTIVITY WAS MODERATE IN 3 RD DIV
AO WITH ABFS IN GO NOI ISLAND, " ARIZONA TERRITORY", AND QUE SON
AREAS. RVN INTELLIGENCE REPORTS THAT 2 ND NVA DISVISON CONTINUES
PEREPARATION FOR POSSIBLE ATTACK IN SA JUYNH AREA. STATISTICS FOR
THE REPORTING PERIOD ARE AS FOLLOWS: FRIENDLY CASUALTIES 7 KIA.
2 MIA; ENEMY CASUALTIES 10 KIA, 2 CAPTURED. FRIENDLY ARTILLERY
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FIRE A TOTAL OF 2,887 ROUNDS; 697 NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS
2,190 SOUTH. FOR THE FIFTH STRAIGHT DAY THE GVN REPORTS NO NAVAL
GUNFIRE SUPPORT MISSIONS OR TACTICAL AIR SORTIES.

3. DURING PAST WEEK APPROXIMATELY 1,300 CAO DAI DEPARTED CHU
LAI, QUANG TIN, BY SHIP FOR RESETTLEMENT IN PHUOC THUY PROVINCE
THE MOVEMENT HAD BEEN UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR THE PAST SIX
MONTHS. OVER HALF THE PEOPLE CAME FROM THE MOUNTAIN DISTRICT
OF HAU DUC WHERE THEY HAD BEEN LIVING FOR YEARS AS REFUGEES

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FROM OUTLYING VALLEYS CONTROLLED BY THE COMMUNISTS. QUANG TIN
POLOFF REPORTS THAT THE LOCAL CAO DAI CHURCH MAY MOVE MORE PEO
PLE SOUTH IF INITIAL REPORTS FROM PHUOC THUY ARE FAVORABLE.

PART VIII MR 2

1. WITH NEAR CONCLUSION MARCH 19 OF PHU YEN SECTOR OPERATION TO
OPEN ROUTE 7- B FROM QL-1 TO PHU BON BORDER, LEVEL OF CONTACT IN
MR 2 HAS DROPPED. MOST SIGNIFICANT ENEMY ACTION IN LAST 45
HOURS WAS VC ATTACK ON RF BATTALION IN TUY AN DISTRICT PHU YEN
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ON MARCH 18; ATTACK WAS REPULSED WITH REPORTED RF LOSS OF ONE
WIA AND VC OF ELEVEN KIA. REMAINDER OF REPORTED INCIDENTS WERE
SMALL SCALE ENEMY PROBE AND INDIRECT FIRE ATTACKS ON FRIENDLY
POSITIONS IN NORTHERN BINH DINH AND IN HAM THUAN DISTRICT BINH
THUAN.

2. PHU BON PROVINCE CHIEF HOSTED RESIDENT ICCS TEAM AND US
ELEMENT OF JMT AT MONTAGNARD DINNER AND CEREMONY NIGHT OF
MARCH 18. ONE CANDEL ON CHEO REO TEAM DEPARTED ON " ROTATION"
AND WAS REPLACED SAME DAY.

3. POINT OF ENTRY (POE) ICCS TEAM N CAM RANH STILL LACKING
POLDEL HAS BEEN HOSPITABLY RECEIVED BY RANKING ARVN OFFICER

IN AREA(CO 5 TH AREA LOGISTICS COMMAND) AND AFFORDED COMPLETE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT. SENIOR CANDEL HAS TOLD LOCAL AMERICAN OFFICIAL THAT TEAM HAS YET TO RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING ITS DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. EVEN THOUGH POE TEAM THUS IS STILL GROING IN THE DARK, CAM RANH CITIZENRY IS PREPARING LIST OF COMMUNIST CEASE FIRE VIOLATIONS FOR PRESENTATION TO IT.

4. QUI NHON ICCS TEAM BY CONTRAST WAS REFUSED ADMISSION TO PORT AREA THERE CIRCA MARCH 16. REFUSAL REPORTEDLY LED TO HARD FEELINGS AND INITIAL THREAT BY INDODEL CHIEF TO PULL TEAM OUT OF QUI NHON ALTOGETHER. TEAM HAD WANTED TO EXAMINE SHIPMENT OF MUNITIONS WHICH THEY UNDERSTOOD WAS BEING OFFLOADED AT QUI NHON. ALTHOUGH THIS REQUEST WAS REFUSED THEAM WAS EVENTUALLY ALLOWED TO EXAMINE SHIPPING DOCUMENTS. SHIPMENT TURNED OUT TO BE COAST WISE, ORIGINATING IN VUNG TAU(WHICH IS NOT GVN POE FOR MUNITIONS EITHER), BUT MUNTIONS HAD APPARENTLY ENTERED SVN BEFORE JANUARY 28.

5. FROM MARCH 9 TO DATE APPROXIMATELY 5,000 DISPLACED WAR VICTIMS (DWV) HAVE BEEN TRANSPORTED BY ROAD FROM REFUGEE CAMPS IN PLEIKU TO THEIR HOME PROVINCE OF KONTUM. THIS MOVEMENT IS CONTINUING. MORE THAN 3,000 OF THESE DWV HAVE RETURNED TO THEIR NATIVE VILLAGES, WHILE REMAINDER ARE STAYING IN MARY LOU CAMP NEAR KONTUM CITY, BACK IN PLEIKU HOWEVER SOME 350 ETHNIC VIETNAMESE HEADS OF FAMILY REPRESENTING APPROXIMATELY 2,000 PEOPLE LAST WEEK PETITIONED PRESIDENT THIEU TO BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN THERE. THEY COMPLAINED THAT THERE IS NO ACCESSIBLE FARM LAND IN KONTUM. ALMOST ALL OF PETITIONERS ARE NATIVESOF BINH DINH WHO WERE INITIALLY RESETTLED IN KONTUM TWO YEARS AGO AND FLED TO PLEIKU IN 1972.

6. SOME OF DWV NOW BACK IN KONTUM HAVE SETTLED IN POLEI KRONG AREA AND HAVE ALREADY JOINED LOCAL RP IN FRIENDLY EXCHANGES WITH COMMUNIST TROOPS ON OPPOSITE BANK OF POKO RIVER (SAIGON 4395
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SIT REP). NEITHER SIDE IS DISPALYING WEAPONS OR PROPAGANDIZING THE OTHER. ALL PARTIES INVOLVED ARE BELIEVED TO BE MONTAGNARDS.

7. KHANH HOA PROVINCE COUNCIL MEMBERS AND VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTY REPRESENTATIVES (INCLUDING REVOLUTIONARY DAI VIET BUT NOT DEMOCRACY PARTY) SENT PETITION TO THIEU AND OTHER HIGH GVN OFFICIALS ASKING COMPLETE AMNESTY FOR NON-COMMUNIST POLITICAL PRISONERS HELD BY GVN. PETITION WHICH IS IN FORM OF LETTER BEARS DATE OF FEB27. WE DO NOT KNOW WHO INSPIRED IT ALTHOUGH PROVINCE COUNCIL PARTICIPATION IS A STRONG INDICATION THAT PETITION IS AT LEAST TOLERABLE TO GVN.

8. DEMOCRACY PARTY HAS NOW ESTABLISHED ITSELF AT SUB PROVINCIAL LEVEL IN PLEIKU PROVINCE.

9. CHIEF AN QUANG MONK IN BAN ME THUOT TOLD POL-OFF THERE THAT HE HAD BEEN IMPRESSED AND GLADDENED BY THIEU' S ATTENDANCE AT MARCH 9 CEREMONEY IN HUE FOR DECEASED PATRIARCH THICH THIEN KHIET. MONK REMAINS CRITICAL HOWEVER OF THIEU' S ORGANIZATION OF DP AND POPULAR FRONT WHICH HE SEES AS PRECURSORS OF DICTATORSHIP. WHEN ASKED BY VISITING EMBOFF

WHETHER IN MONK'S VIEW IT HAD BEEN NECESSARY TO " DESTROY THE HAM
LETS OF BUON HO TO SAVE THEM"(FOUR HAMLETS IN BUON HO DISTRICT
SEIZED BY VC ON CEASE FIRE EVE AND FIERCELY FOUGHT OVER FOR 30
DAYS THEREAFTER NOW TOTALLY DESTROYED). MONK REPLIED WITHOUT
EVIDENT RESERVATION " YES" HEADED, " OTHERWISE, THE COMMUNISTS
WOULD HAVE HELD THEM. JUST LIKE HUE IN 1968."

PART IX MR 3

1. ARVN III CORPS REPORTED THAT VC/ NVA ACTIVITY CONTINUED AT A
MODERATE LEVEL IN THE PRECEDING 24 HOUR PERIOD. 8 GROUND ENGAGE-
MENTS, 1 OF THESE SIGNIFICANT AND 18 ATTACKS BY FIRE, 7 OF WHICH
EXCEEDED 20 ROUNDS WERE REPORTED AS COMMUNIST INITIATED. THE
114 TH RF COMPANY OPERATING 10 KM NORTHEAST OF DONG XOAI IN PHUOC
LONG PROVINCE TOOK 2 ABFS CONSISTING OF 46 ROUNDS OF MIXED
MORTAR AND B-40 GRENADES.
2. THE SITUATION AT THE TON LE CHAM BASE CAMP ON THE SAIGON
RIVER IN TAY NIH PROVINCE IS NOW CRITICAL. THE CAMP IS SHELLED
DAILY AND GROUND PROBES CONTINUE. SINCE 12 MARCH THE BASE HAS RE-
CEIVED 19 AFBFS AND 5 GROUND ATTACKS TOTALING OVER 800 INCOMING
ROUNDS. III CORPS COMMANDER LTG NGUYEN VAN MINH HAS ORDERED

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HEAVY TACAIR STRIKES TO RELIEVE PRESSURE ON THE BASE. OVER 80 SUCH STRIKES WERE FLOWN 19 MARCH. DAILY CASUALTY FIGURES WERE 18 COMMUNISTS KILLED, 3 FRIENDLY KILLED AND 18 WOUNDED. 1 VIETNAMESE CIVILIAN WAS WOUNDED BY MORTAR FRAGMENTS NORTH OF BEN CAT. LATE REPORTS FROM TON LE CHAM INDICATE THAT THE SITUATION THERE HAS WORSENERED. THE AMMO DUMP THERE HAS BEEN BLOWN UP BY INCOMING ROUNDS AND THE GARRISON IS NOW VERY LOW ON AMMO. CHOPPERS CAN NOT GET IN WITH AMMO AND OTHER RESUPPLY NOR TO EVACUATE SOME 40 WOUNDED DUE TO INTENSE GROUND FIRE.

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3. PHUOC LONG PROVINCE IS UNDER INCREASING NVA/ VC PRESSURE. OVER THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS, THERE HAVE BEEN APPROXIMATELY FOUR NVA/ VC SHELLINGS PER DAY, INCLUDING ONE WHICH CAME MUCH TOO CLOSE TO THE VISITING US INTERPROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVE NEAR THE PHUOC BINH AIRSTRIP. OTHER TARGETS HAVE BEEN THE 97 TH RANGER BATTALION COMMAND POST AND PHUOC BINH DISTRICT HQS. AT 2030 17 MARCH AN ESTIMATE COMPANY SIZE COMMUNIST UNIT ATTACKED THE 97 TH RANGERS NEAR SON HA NORTHWEST OF SONG BE, LOSING 15 KIA AND INFLECTING 1 KIA, 8 WIA, AND THE LOSS OF ONE M-16. FARMERS AND WOODCUTTERS ARE REPORTING LARGE NUMBERS OF NVA/ VC IN THE FORESTS IN THE SONG BE AREA MAKING VAGUE THREATS THAT THEY WILL " FLATTEN EVERYTHING " IN THE AREA. THE NVA/ VC HAVE ALWAYS USED PHUOC LONG MAINLY AS A CORRIDOR AND REAR SERVICE AREA. THEIR MILITARY ACTIVITY AND THREATS MAY BE A REACTION TO THE PROVINCE GOVERNMENT'S ENERGETIC EFFORTS TO REPOPULATE AND SUPPLY THE PROVINCE.

4. THE FRENZIED PERIOD OF ORGANIZING THE DEMOCRACY PARTY AND POPULAR FRONT HAS COME TO A GRINDING HALT IN THIS MILITARY REGION AS HAVE THE ACTIVITIES OF THESE HIGHLY HERALDED ORGANIZATIONS. PROVINCE CHIEFS AND THEIR TRUSTED LIEUTENANTS ARE SITTING BACK WAITING FOR WORD FROM SAIGON BEFORE TAKING THE NEXT STEP WHATEVER THAT MAY BE. SOURCES CLOSE TO THESE ORGANIZATIONS SEEM TO BE SATISFIED THAT THE ORGANIZATIONS ARE IN GOOD SHAPE AND THE MEMBERS THEREOF CAN BE TROTTED OUT WHENEVER THE NEED ARISES. POLITICAL INDOCTRINATION GOES ON HOWEVER, WITH OTHERS THAN THOSE DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED WITH EITHER ORGANIZATION CARRYING THE BRUNT OF THE LOAD E. G. THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE COMMITTEES.

5. ICCS SOURCES ARE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE APPROACHING CHANGE-OVER FROM FPJMC TO TPJMC. ONE HIGH RANKING SOURCE SAYS IT WILL BE A CHANGE-OVER FROM A " PARTIALLY FUNCTIONING FPJMC TO A NON FUNCTIONING TPJMC." HE DID NOT WANT TO SPECULATE ON THE CONSEQUENCES, BUT WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT VERY HOPEFUL. HE CITED AS JUST ONE EXAMPLE OF THE PROBLEMS AHEAD THE FACT THAT THE FPJMC HAS NOT DELINEATED CORRIDORS FOR MOVEMENT OF TROOPS BY BOTH

BELLIGERENTS AS CALLED FOR IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT, AND THE AGREEMENT DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR THE TPJMC TO DO SO. HE THEREFORE FEELS THAT IF THE PRG WANTS TO CONTINUE TO DRAG ITS FEET, IT WILL HAVE PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITIES TO DO SO AFTER X PLUS 60.

PART X MR 4

1. ARVN DIVISION COMMANDERS HAVE REDUCED THE NUMBER AND SIZE OF THEIR OPERATIONS, AS HAVE VC/ NVA MAIN FORCE UNITS. LOCAL
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FORCES OF BOTH SIDES ARE STILL ACTIVE, HOWEVER ALMOST MAKING UP IN CASUALTIES IF NOT NOISE FOR THE RELATIVE QUIESCENCE OF THE BIGGER UNITS. IN CHUONG THIEN THE ARVN 21 ST DIV HAS DRASTICALLY CURTAILED ITS ACTIVITIES OVER RECENT WEEKS, AND IS NOW RESPONDING ONLY TO VC/ NVA INITIATED INCIDENTS. JGS INSTRUCTED THE DIVISION TO OBSERVE THE CEASE FIRE " IN EARNEST ", AND THIS IS WHAT IS HAPPENING. THE RELATIVE INACTIVITY OF THE 21 ST DIVISION HAS NOT YET HURT THE GVN'S POSITION IN CHUONG THIEN B

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

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Concepts: n/a
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Authority: smithrj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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BUDAPEST
CINCPAC
JAKARTA
MANILA
OTTAWA
PHNOM PENH

VIENTIANE
FRANCE
WARSAW
COMUSMACV
CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB
DANANG
NHA TRANG
L BIEN HOA
CAN THO

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